

## ***NEWS & NOTES***

### **Those in need of prayers...**

- Wendy Willis
- Jess Miller (classmate of Katie)
- Kayla Hartley
- Dave Cottrill

### **Please keep in prayer...**

- Don Coen, Sr.
- Grace Lancaster
- Marie Roberts
- Charlotte Lancaster

### **Those unable to come out...**

#### **ANN'S RETREAT**

- Josephine Clow

#### **BRIGHTWOOD CENTER**

- Shirley Campbell

#### **THE LAURELS**

- Virginia Malick

#### **VALLEY HAVEN**

- Pauline Sellars

#### **SHUT-IN AT HOME**

- Alfred & Mary Jane Myers
- Zeda Goddard
- Pauline Midcap
- Ann Rudolph
- Trudell Tennant
- Nina Sapp
- Viril & Mildred Miller
- Mary Sciance

"When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, but finds none. Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when it comes, it finds the house empty, swept, and put in order. Then it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there, and the last state of that person is worse than the first. So also will it be with this evil generation." (Matt. 12:43-45)

The general thought behind what Jesus said is that if we want to purge ourselves of what is old, useless, and/or harmful, then it is not sufficient to just empty our lives; we must find something good and honest to take the place of that which is gone. Thus, spring cleaning is not just an end, it is a new beginning. What good things are you putting in your life? Have you made room for them by getting rid of what has been dragging you down?

Look at what David wrote in Psalm 51: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit." The king of Israel wrote those words after he was confronted by Nathan the

prophet and made to own up to his sins involving Bathsheba and Uriah. David was a man after God's own heart and desired to do good, but he was not perfect. He knew that he had sinned, and so he knew that before anything else could take place, he must first have a fresh start. When we sin, is this our reaction? So often we beat ourselves up about it but feel like there is little to nothing we can do. It is tempting to throw our hands up and resign to sin because it seems like we always lose the battle.

When talking about new beginnings, especially when it comes to spiritual matters, it would be remiss to not mention a person coming to Christ through baptism and having their sins washed away. That's what Jesus was talking about with Nicodemus when he said, "you must be born again." Sometimes it seems like we in the Church chafe against those words, that phrasing; but not only is "born again" a Biblical term, it is an apt descriptor! A Christian is to be born again, meaning that we leave our old life behind and start this new one living for our Lord & Savior. The problem most people have is that they think it's just some prayer, or some ritual, some event that takes place once and fixes everything. But what does God's Word say?

"Now this I say and

testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ!— assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." (Eph. 4:17-24)

Becoming a Christian is a new beginning, yes, but it is not the end. That beginning must hearken in changes to our lives, and that takes work. Just as much as new plants must be planted & new clothes bought when spring comes around, and just as much as a graduate must find a job and apply what they've learned, so must an individual live in a manner that follows the example of Jesus when they put Him on in baptism. In reality, the changes start BEFORE baptism; that is the essence of repentance, to turn away from the sins in which

we previously walked. But the changes are progressive, meaning that they continue and become more profound, once that person is reconciled to God.

Do you know what one of the best things about new beginnings is? The fact that they could come at any moment. Every single day is an opportunity for a lost sinner to have their sins forgiven by Jesus' blood. It is an opportunity for a Christian whose love for God has grown cold to be revived and renewed. The Lord is longsuffering and He gives us time to start anew, but we are the ones who decide whether to or not. Just like with each passing year there is the cycle of birth, death, & rebirth, so it can be with our lives. But we are not promised "next year." We are not promised any time except for the day that is to come, when Jesus comes again, and by that day it will be too late.

Commit yourself to God! If you have wandered away, make today the first day of a new dedicated life!

Jarred Currence

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# Jerusalem's Gates

J P U P K Q L D U N G H D G F E J B F X  
A R S Q N S B Q K W I L F V E W Y V X O  
G H E D M P W J B Z O Q A A G P E C N L  
U G H I V D K R X H Q A O N Z M I P M N  
A R W Z P U T Z W V N O T C F U Q H U F  
R B B Y Z K I K C H J G F P V S W T U S  
D K V J L Y M M R M J B M P I T S P V U  
J D A D A T M Q V M Y S Z W Q E U I Z B  
J U H V Q E V F C N C Z N D R R K F Q Z  
E S D D P P X T N M T G V A F H Y S X U  
Y Y T R O H V I P B F L F U F V M M T M  
G V O D A R Z P V R F F O E F W I B C N  
Z I K Y V A L L E Y W M U Q O I T F P K  
A C I G H I I Y E S H A N A H M B J G P  
D W D L R M K B O H O M T E N S H E E P  
B V K D N T W A T E R K A A W M J T M Z  
T M B W G J H Y A S S F I S H V G E O L  
A C U F E A V W X T E Y N T S E D M D U  
S W H F M W O Y L C W U N J Q V B G P D  
I Y U G A X A W A V S X J L U M A Y I I  
W K B V R A D D S J H C R T Y D G M O E

- Nehemiah went out by the Valley Gate by night (Neh. 2:13)
- The sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate (Neh. 3:3)
- Shallum, son of Col-hozeh, repaired the Fountain Gate (Neh. 3:15)
- Above the Horse Gate the priests repaired (Neh. 3:28)
- Malchijah, son of Rechab, repaired the Dung Gate (Neh. 3:14)
- The priests built the Sheep Gate (Neh. 3:1)
- Joiada and Meshullam repaired the Gate of Yeshanah (Neh. 3:6)
- There was a square at the Gate of Ephraim (Neh. 8:16)
- The people gathered before the Water Gate (Neh. 8:1)
- The merchants' house was opposite the Muster Gate (Neh. 3:31)
- The choir came to a halt at the Gate of the Guard (Neh. 12:39)
- Shemaiah was the keeper of the East Gate (Neh. 3:29)

*In search of...*



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## A New Beginning

The weather is beautiful right now, isn't it? Springtime is when everything in nature is coming back after hibernating or migrating during the cold winter months. The days are longer, the air is warmer, and everything seems to be coming alive where it seemed dead before. And, you know, this idea of everything starting fresh is not just seen in nature. As I'm sure you know all too well, schools are having their graduations this coming month. While many might look at

graduation as the end of school, in truth it is a new beginning. That's why the ceremonies are referred to as commencements. It is the start of a new chapter in life, of adulthood, of careers, etc.

Spring is also the time many of us take advantage of to do some much-needed cleaning & airing out of our houses. This idea of "out with the old, in with the new" is a universal one; it applies not only to physical houses, but also to our hearts & minds. This is shown by Jesus when He said,

### TIMES OF SERVICE

SUNDAY		
Bible Classes*	10:00 AM	
AM Worship	10:45 AM	
PM Worship	6:30 PM	
WEDNESDAY		
Bible Classes*	7:00 PM	
(*Bible classes are for all ages.)		

### THOSE PRIVILEGED to SERVE

#### SUNDAY A.M.

Class Prayer	J. Lemal
Announcements	J. Currence
Open Prayer	E. Roberts
Song Leader	N. Marshall
Scripture	Phil. 2
Reader	M. Ferrell
Prayer	H. Marshall
Lord's Supper	
Bread	D. Coen Jr.
Cup	C. Isinghood
Serve	K. Prager
Serve	S. Michael
Closing Prayer	D. Harless

#### SUNDAY P.M.

Announcements	J. Currence
Open Prayer	C. Isinghood
Song Leader	E. Roberts
Scripture	Phil. 3
Reader	J. Lemal
1st Prayer	L. Miller
Communion	N. Marshall
Closing Prayer	W. Campbell

#### WEDNESDAY

Class Prayer	Meeting
Song Leader	Meeting
Invitation	Meeting
Announcements	J. Currence
Closing Prayer	Meeting

### SERMONS FOR TODAY:

- "Preparing For the Race"
- "The Christian Life"
- "Is There a Difference in Baptisms?"